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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and the listing of claims in the application.

Claims Listing:

1 - 10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) A counterfeit detection method comprising:

reading a label attached to a manufactured item, said label incorporating a manufacturer-controlled identification number;

querying a third party authority to verify that said item is owned by said store and that said store received title to it from a chain of owners beginning with is a genuine product of its indicated manufacturer; and

generating a certificate of authenticity to provide to a purchaser of said item if said querying yields an affirmative result.

12. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 11 and wherein said reading comprises scanning said label with a bar code reader.

13. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 11 wherein said identification number is encoded in said label and wherein said encoded number is one of the following code types: one-dimensional bar code, two-dimensional bar code, RFID tag and a magnetic tag.

14 - 21. (Cancelled)

22. (Currently Amended) A point of sale unit in a store, the unit comprising:

a reader to read a label attached to a manufactured item, said label incorporating a manufacturer-controlled identification number;

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a verifier to query a third party authority to verify that said item is ~~a genuine product of~~ owned by said store and that said store received title to it from a chain of owners beginning with its indicated manufacturer; and

a printer to generate a certificate of authenticity if said query yields an affirmative result.

23 - 24. (Cancelled)

25. (Original) The unit according to claim 22 and wherein said reader comprises one of the following readers: a one-dimensional bar code reader, a two-dimensional bar code reader, an RFID tag reader, and a magnetic tag reader.

26. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 11 and wherein a database maintained by said third party authority stores identities of commercial entities to whom said items are sold ~~transferred~~ from manufacture until point of sale.

27. (Cancelled)

28. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim ~~[[27]]~~ 22 and wherein said result is affirmative when said store is recorded in said database as having authorized possession of said item.

29. (Currently Amended) A counterfeit detection method comprising:

maintaining a database cataloguing the following:

manufactured items identified by manufacturer-controlled identification numbers; and

commercial entities to ~~between~~ which said items are sold ~~transferred~~ from manufacture until point of sale;

receiving a query from a store regarding a particular one of said identification numbers wherein said particular identification number is associated with a particular one of said items; and

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providing an affirmative response to said query if said store is recorded in said database as owning ~~having authorized possession of~~ said particular item.

30. (New) A counterfeit detection method comprising:

electronically transferring ownership of labeled manufactured items from manufacturer and ultimately to a store;

receiving a counterfeit query from an authentication unit at said store; and

providing a certificate of non-counterfeit to said authentication unit if said store is registered as owning said item.